

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-05 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7386
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (BEGIN, MENAHEM), IS, US
SUBJECT: MEDIA ON BEGIN VISIT

REF: TEL AVIV 5388

1. WHILE THE REPORTED EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN CLASH RECEIVED
IMPORTANT FRONT PAGE COVERAGE, THE BEGIN VISIT CONTINUES
TO DOMINATE THE NEWS. TODAY'S MEDIA REPORT ON A BRIEFING
GIVEN ISRAELI CORRESPONDENTS BY A MEMBER (NOT NAMED) OF
THE BEGIN PARTY. HIGHLIGHTS: ARRANGEMENTS FOR RECONVENING
THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER DAYAN AND THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF EGYPT,
JORDAN AND SYRIA DURING THEIR ATTENDANCE AT THE SEPTEMBER
OPENING OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY; BEGINI IS NOT REPEATING
RABIN'S "MISTAKE" OF MAKING CLOSE U.S.-ISRAEL AGREEMENT
ON THE KEY ISSUES A PRECONDITION TO RETURNING TO GENEVA;
AFTER READING A DOCUMENT FROM BEGIN ON ISRAEL'S
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CONTRIBUTIONS TO U.S. SECURITY, THE PRESIDENT
REMARKED THAT HE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOWN HOW
MUCH THE U.S. HAD RECEIVED FROM ISRAEL; AND THE
U.S. WILL PROVIDE THE IDF WITH HYDROFOIL PATROL
BOATS, HELICOPTERS, AND \$100 MILLION TOWARDS
DEVELOPMENT OF THE MERKAVIA TANK.

2. NEWSPAPER COMMENT ON THE VISIT IS AGAIN HEADY AND,

BENEFITTING FROM THE EXTRA SPACE OF
FRIDAY'S WEEKEND EDITIONS, IS PARTICULARLY LONG-
WINDED. HOWEVER, COMMENTARY AND EDITORIALS ARE

GENERALLY IN THE SAME VEIN AS THOSE OF THE PAST TWO

DAYS. TO WIT: THE VISIT WAS A SUCCESS, BEGIN'S
WAS A FINE PERFORMANCE, THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE
PRESIDENT HIT IT OFF WELL, SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES

REMAIN BUT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON CONCENTRATING
EFFORTS TOWARD RECONVENING GENEVA.

3. SEVERAL

OBSERVERS DRAW COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE
RABIN AND BEGIN VISIT --INVARIABLY TO RABIN'S
DETIMENT. IN ADDITION TO BEGIN'S SUPERIOR ORATORY,
SENSE OF HUMOR AND HIS WARMTH OF PERSONALITY, GUINE
NOTES IN YEDIO AHARANOT THAT RABIN HAD THE MISFORTUNE
OF ARRIVING IN WASHINGTON WITH THE REPUTATION
OF A DOVE AND THEN SOUNDING HAWKISH TO CARTER; WHILE
THE MODERATION THAT BEGIN SHOWED WAS A WELCOME RELIEF
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TO HIS HOSTS FROM THE IMAGE THAT PRECEDED HIM.
HAARETZ' MARCUS WRITES THAT BEGIN DELIGHTED
WASHINGTON BY STRONGLY ADVOCATING THE UNEXPECTED.
HE WANTS THE GENEVA CONFERENCE; HE STRESSES PEACE;
AND HE IS READY TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION 242 AND
DISCUSS EVERYTHING WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. ACCORDING
TO MARCUS THE ADMINISTRATION REALIZES THAT DAYAN
IS THE ONE BEHIND THESE IDEAS. BEGIN'S (OR DAYAN'S)
IDEA IS BOTH SIMPLE AND SOPHISTICATED. "ISRAEL
MUST STOP DISCUSSING THE FUTURE OF THE BORDERS AND
THE MEANING OF PEACE WITH THE AMERICANS, AND START
DISCUSSING THEM WITH THE ARABS. IN THAT WAY
ISRAEL WILL SAVE HERSELF REPEATED CONFRONTATIONS
WITH THE U.S., AND THE INTENTIONS OF THE SIDES WILL
BE MADE PLAIN ACROSS THE NEGOTIATING TABLE." AT THE
END OF A LONG ESSAY IN MAARIV, HARIF SUMMARIZES
BEGIN'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN WASHINGTON BY SAYING THAT
HE FORCED THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE
ANOTHER "REASSESSMENT," BUT THIS TIME IN THE
DIRECTION FAVORED BY ISRAEL.

4. A NUMBER OF OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE BEEN

INTERVIEWED ON THEIR REACTION TO THE BEGIN VISIT;
THE RESPONSES HAVE BEEN GENERALLY RESERVED. THUS,
SHIMON PERES, REFERRING TO THE BEGIN-CARTER
CONVERSATIONS, REMARKED THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED TO
COMMENT ON THE BASIS OF GUESS WORK. HE ADDED THAT
CONCERNING IDEAS ON THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, NOTHING
HAS EMERGED THAT IS PARTICULARLY NEW. LABOR PARTY
LEADER ISRAEL GALILI SOUNDED A WARNING AGAINST THE
"DEMANDS OF EXCESSIVE CONCESSIONS OF STRATEGIC
ASSETS ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS AND SINAI WHILE
ATTACHING AN ALLEGEDLY SANCTIFIED BOND TO THE
TOWN OF NABLUS." YIGAL ALLON CAUTIONED
AGAINST THE HEAVY PRESSURES AND FAR GRAVER RESULTS
THAT AN EXTREMIST PROGRAM(PRESUMABLY BEGIN'S) WOJLD
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BRING IN ITS TRAIN. ON THE OTHER HAND, DMC LEADER
YIGAL YADIN EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH BEGIN SAVE
IN ONE AREA. YADIN'S REPEATED HIS VIEW THAT ISRAEL
WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP TERRITORY ON ALL THREE FRONTS
INCLUDING THE WEST BANK FOR GENUINE PEACE. THAT
PEACE MAY TAKE "ANOTHER 20 OR 30 YEARS," BUT
ULTIMATELY "WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC
STATE OF ISRAEL."
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